

energy, increase conservation and increase the use of clean, modern and reliable sources of energy. But Democrats are playing politics, smearing TOM DELAY, DICK CHENEY and Condoleezza Rice, and the United States still does not have a comprehensive national energy policy.

South Carolina families need relief from record high energy costs, and Congress can now act to lead America to greater energy independence. This is a matter of economic and national security and we cannot afford to wait another year.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

PROTECTING THE NATION FROM AVIAN FLU

(Mr. EMANUEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, this country is dangerously close to a real biological crisis. Yesterday we learned an American company mailed a deadly avian flu strain to 37,000 laboratories in the United States and around the world as part of a routine test kit. The potential error is a reminder of the real danger of a flu pandemic and the millions of deaths it could cause. It also reminds us of the responsibility as a Congress and as a Nation to improve our ability to produce and distribute flu vaccine and to prepare for the pandemic.

The Flu Protection Act, which Senator BAYH and I introduced, would help ensure that enough vaccine is produced each year, fund research to combat avian flu, and require the development of contingency plans in the case of a pandemic.

The impending crisis must encourage this administration to take action now. Earlier this month, President Bush took an important step when he authorized a quarantine to stem the spread of avian flu.

In a letter that Senator BAYH and I will send today to the White House, there are other steps the President can take without legislation. He can increase our vaccine stockpiles, help States and cities prepare for the crisis of a pandemic, and provide the incentives for vaccine manufacturers to increase their production.

Madam Speaker, yesterday's announcement reminds us that the next flu pandemic is just around the corner, and the time to act is now. Congress and the President should not wait for this disaster to reach our shores before acting to protect this Nation.

SUPPORT THE CHILD INTERSTATE ABORTION NOTIFICATION ACT

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, in most schools an underage child is

prohibited from attending a school field trip without first obtaining parental authorization, yet nothing forbids this child from being taken across State lines in disregard of State laws for the purpose of undergoing a life-altering procedure, an abortion.

Please note these documents from a local school district in which it is required to have extensive information and parental authorization for a simple field trip or for a release for disbursement of medication, a total of eight pages for a field trip or for giving an aspirin, even brought from the child's home. But for an abortion, nothing is required.

My legislation, the Child Interstate Abortion Notification Act, CIANA, would make it a Federal offense to transport an underage child across State lines in circumvention of State and local parental notification laws for the purpose of having an abortion. It will also require that, in a State without a parental notification requirement, abortion providers be required to notify a parent.

Today, CIANA will be marked up by the House Committee on the Judiciary. I hope we can pass the bill in the House quickly to protect our underage girls.

THE CHARADE OF GOP LEADER- SHIP REGARDING THE ESTATE TAX

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I was moved by the words of Dr. Dodd from Omaha and thought about today's continuation of the charade our friends in the Republican leadership play, a very cynical game that they have done every Congress since I have been here that is both unnecessary and unjustified.

Instead of allowing the legislative process to work here to deal with the consensus that exists to raise estate tax limits and solve problems of family businesses and farms, instead they are going to go through an empty effort to repeal it altogether, which ultimately they know will not happen.

In the meantime, this week, 2.9 million families are caught in the snare of the Alternative Minimum Tax, not the fabulously wealthy who are dodging taxes but hundreds of thousands of hard-working, non-rich Americans, whose only sin is, they pay their taxes, they are raising their family and they are saving for the future.

Rather than the fixing the Alternative Minimum Tax, today's charade is a shameful dereliction of duty for American taxpayers.

LET THE DEATH TAX DIE FOR GOOD

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, it is time that we bury the death tax today, once and for all. For too long the American dream has turned into the American nightmare and for too many citizens and countless small businesses.

Many Americans with dreams take risks, invest their savings, work long hours, and the government keeps over half of their assets when they die, 55 percent. That is the amount Washington takes with the death tax, 55 percent, and that is not fair to anyone.

The death tax undermines our economy, and I know that we can do better. It costs our economy over 250,000 jobs a year. That is a quarter of a million people who should be collecting paychecks rather than unemployment checks.

Madam Speaker, the death tax is hurting families, and it is killing our small businesses. Freedom and liberty demand that hard-working Americans be able to leave their children the results of their success, not have Washington get a windfall. Let us act today and let the death tax die for good.

ETHICAL SYSTEM OF U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SOLIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my Republican colleagues to join me in restoring the ethical system to this Chamber.

Currently, a member of the Republican leadership is at the center of a troubling array of investigations into corruption, abuse of power and ethics violations. Instead of being forthright and open to these allegations, the Republican leadership has stripped the ethical rules of this institution to cater and protect one of their own. By doing so, Republican leadership has abandoned a tradition of trust and transparency in this body.

As Members of Congress, we are responsible to adhering to the ethical guidelines set forth by this Congress. As public servants, we must answer to the American public, and while we craft the law, we are not above the law.

I urge my colleagues to answer the concerns of the American public and remove the question of any possible ethics violations that tarnish the reputation of this Chamber. Democrats want to restore strong, bipartisan ethics rules. It is time Republicans join us in passing the Mollohan resolution and restore the ethical system and the integrity it upholds in the U.S. House of Representatives.

DEMOCRACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, it has been 2 years since the United

States troops entered Iraq, and it has become clear that the democratic elections that have been provided to the people of Iraq through this campaign have begun to spread throughout the region.

In Beirut on Monday, hundreds of thousands of Lebanese protesters gathered in Martyr Square, which some are now calling Freedom Square, to demonstrate for the removal of Syrian troops to withdraw from Lebanon. They chanted, "Sovereignty, Freedom, and Independence."

When their prime minister was assassinated 4 weeks ago and replaced with a pro-Syrian prime minister, the Lebanese people took to the streets and called for freedom. Their protests sparked the resignation of the pro-Syrian prime minister.

Because of U.S. efforts in the Middle East, freedom is no longer something inconceivable to the people of this region. Instead, they have witnessed the spread of freedom to their neighbors and have been empowered by it.

We must continue to support policies which promote freedom in the Middle East.

MEMORIALIZING THE NATIONAL DAY OF SILENCE

(Mr. FARR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to provide a voice for those too often silenced, the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered students who face verbal, nonverbal and physical harassment in our schools.

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Today is the National Day of Silence; and across the country, students have taken a vow of silence to protest the discrimination and intolerance that gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people face on a daily basis. We must continue to promote the diversity that makes our country so rich, while denouncing stereotypes that make it harder for youths to accept themselves. Stereotypes also contribute to the harassment, prejudice, and discrimination that silence GLBT youth.

For that reason, I am proud to sponsor H.R. 123, which memorializes the National Day of Silence.

I would also like to highlight the new campaign from the Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network called TeachRespect.org.

I would also like to thank Mat Friday and Bruce Carlsen, community members in my district who are working hard to make K-12 schools safe, and especially Stewart Rosenstein, who is a tireless advocate for the GLBT youth in Santa Cruz, California.

I commend my colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), for introducing such important legislation. I urge my colleagues to be cosponsors.

NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

(Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, this week is the 25th anniversary of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. When President Reagan first announced National Crime Victims' Rights Week, he said, "For too long, the victims of crime have been the forgotten persons of our criminal justice system. Each new victim personally represents an instance in which the system has failed, and lack of concern for victims compounds that failure."

The Crime Victims' Rights constitutional amendment is an important step forward that will empower crime victims by allowing them to confront their assailants in court and alerting them of prisoner releases and allowing victims to seek restitution from their attackers.

Last Congress, we passed the PROTECT Act, also known as the Amber Alert bill. The PROTECT Act stiffens penalties for sex offenders, eliminated the statute of limitations for these crimes, and created a national Amber Alert system. We passed the Debbie Smith Act, which funds expanding and improving the quality of crime labs to conduct DNA analyses to catch sex offenders and other criminals, ensuring that the right person is going to jail.

But there is more we can do. Last year, Minnesota suffered a great tragedy with Dru Sjodin being abducted. We need to pass Dru's Law this year.

ARROGANT MAJORITY DISMANTLES ETHICS PROCESS

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, a dark cloud and a suspicion of corruption hangs over this House of Representatives. It is the talk of the Nation. With no Committee on Standards of Official Conduct or reasonable ethical standards to speak of, there is no hope that the dark cloud will recede and that daylight will be let in.

By systematically dismantling the House ethics process, the majority has denied this House the right to investigate its own Members and thus betrayed our core American values. Honesty, integrity, and accountability, the values, which should be the hallmark of this government, have instead been thrown under the bus by an arrogant majority, casualties in a misguided campaign to shield from accountability those who abuse this House.

This House cannot function without an open, accountable, and independent ethics process; and the molestation of that process by the majority is an abuse of power that cannot stand.

It is for these reasons I have repeatedly asked the Chair of the Committee

on Rules to hold a bipartisan ethics hearing. As guardians of the democratic process, our Committee on Rules has the unique responsibility to protect the integrity of this hallowed institution.

What are we waiting for? This dark cloud must be lifted, the air must be cleansed, and the ethics rules must be fully restored, because the very credibility of the government and its ability to lead the American people hang in the balance.

DEATH TAX REPEAL PERMANENCY ACT KEEPS FAMILY FARMS THRIVING

(Mr. RYUN of Kansas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to vote to permanently repeal the death tax. The death tax hurts average Americans who have worked hard to build a family business and want to pass it on to their children.

Arguments from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle ignore those who the death tax hurts the most. I am particularly concerned about one group of people impacted by the death tax, and that is the family farm.

There are approximately 2 million family farms in America, many of which are in my district, the second district of Kansas. These farms produce 94 percent of the American agricultural products that are sold. More importantly, however, they pay death taxes as high as 47 percent when they deed the farm to their children. Furthermore, there are twice as many farm estates paying death taxes than any other type of estates combined. This troubles me because family farms cannot afford to pay high taxes that could be pushing them out of business.

Unless we act, the death tax will be reinstated in 2011. If that happens, countless family farms will be forced to sell land, buildings, and equipment, putting them out of business.

For this reason, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the family farm and vote for the Death Tax Repeal Permanency Act.

REPUBLICAN-LEANING "PLAIN DEALER" EDITORIAL SEEKS BREATH OF INTEGRITY

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, from April 8, a Plain Dealer editorial from a Cleveland Republican-leaning newspapers writes: "Tom DeLay, the House Majority Leader, can fashion what to him is a reasonable explanation for each of the ethics questions increasingly being raised against him."

"It's a witch hunt by a Democrat out to destroy him," DeLay responds. This is the Plain Dealer writing.